[1745]

MEMORIAL

Concerning the

Preſent State of the PROTESTANT RELIGION in *France*.

In which is ſhewn,

By many Inſtances, to what Degree CRUELTY is now carried on againſt thoſe, who dare openly profeſs it in that Kingdom.

BY the Advices we have lately received both from *France* and the adjacent Countries, it appears, that they are now determined in that Kingdom to make uſe of the utmoſt Severities againſt their Proteſtant Subjects. The ſaid Proteſtants had, ſince the Year 1743, enjoyed ſome Toleration, the Court being perſuaded from a Thouſand Proofs, that in their religious Aſſemblies, nothing paſs'd, that was contrary to the State; that they held them without Tumult; that they were without Arms of any Kind; and that they prayed God for the Proſperity of the King and his Auguſt Family; perpetually recommending Submiſſion and Obedience to his Majeſty, agreeably to the Acts paſſed in their laſt national Synod, that was held *Auguſt* 18, 1744. The Court, I ſay, which had a thouſand Means to convince themſelves of the Innocence of their Aſſemblies, did not only not oppoſe, but ſeem'd rather, by their Forbearance, to authorize them.

Under

Under Favour of this Calm, the Proteſtant Religion made conſiderable Progreſs: Many who, out of Fear, did not dare to profeſs it, have publickly ſhewn their Zeal for it; and others, who formerly had been forced by Violence to forſake it, have readily embraced it again; and theſe laſt have been ſo many in Number, that by a Computation, made by the Roman Catholicks themſelves, it has, in the Space of ſeven or eight Months, amounted to 27000 on the Side of *Montauban*, and in that Neighbourhood. Upon this, the Roman Catholick Clergy took the Alarm; fearing that ſuch Converſions would conſiderably diminiſh their Revenues, by taking from them the caſual Profits, ariſing from Chriſtenings, Marriages, *&c.* They have left no Means untry'd, to engage the Court to intereſt itſelf in an Affair which ſo nearly concerned them. In order to ſupport their Inſtances the better, they made them at a Time, when they were about to furniſh the King with a free Gift of ſeveral Millions of Livers; and, if Credit may be given to certain Advices, they gave it very ſtrongly to be underſtood, that they were a Body, which was not to be ſlighted: In ſhort, after trying all imaginable Means, they obtained two Edicts of the Court againſt the Proteſtants of *Montauban*, one of the 1ſt, the other of the 16th of *February* 1745. They were not, 'tis true, intirely new; the firſt was publiſhed the 11th of *September* 1726, but they added to it a ſevere Article concerning Preachers. The ſecond is a Repetition, Word for Word, of that which was publiſhed the 9th of *November* 1728; What is moſt remarkable, is, that, amongſt all the Edicts that have been publiſhed againſt the Proteſtant Aſſemblies, they have choſen two of the moſt rigid, or rather, the moſt unjuſt; but that every one may judge of their Contents, we ſhall only exhibit them ſuch as they were publiſhed; whereby it will be plain, that where-ever a true Roman Catholick Clergy has the upper Hand, there is no Evil, that the Proteſtants have not Reaſon to expect.

The

The King's Ordonnance concerning People of the Pretended Reform'd Religion, of the 1ſt of February 1745.

By the King's Order.

THE King being informed, that, notwithſtanding all Exerciſe of the pretended Reformed Religion is forbidden by his Edicts, Declarations and Ordonnances, there have been nevertheleſs of late, ſeveral Aſſemblies in the Diſtrict of *Montauban*; and deſiring to provide againſt it, his Majeſty has ordered and does order, That, conformably to his ſaid Edicts, Declarations and Ordonnances, all Preachers, who have convoked, or ſhall convoke Aſſemblies in the ſaid Diſtrict, and who have preached or ſhall preach, or who have or ſhall exerciſe therein any Function, be arraign'd, convicted and puniſhed; as likewiſe all and every Subject or Subjects of his Majeſty, of what Quality or Condition ſoever, who ſhall have been, or may be found hereafter, in the ſaid Aſſemblies, and who ſhall be there taken in the Fact; his Majeſty willing, that they be condemned to ſuffer the Pains expreſſed in the ſaid Edicts, Declarations and Ordonnances: And, moreover, with regard to thoſe, who ſhall be known to have aſſiſted at the ſaid Aſſemblies, but who have not been arreſted upon the Spot, his Majeſty wills and requires, that, by the Orders of the Intendant and Commiſſary in the ſaid Diſtrict, the Men ſhould be immediately ſent, without any Hearing or Tryal, to his Gallies, to ſerve there as Slaves during their Lives; and the Women and Daughters to be ſhut up, for ever, in Places which ſhall be aſſigned them.

His Majeſty commands and orders the ſaid Intendant and Commiſſary in the ſaid Diſtrict of *Montauban*, and his Bailiffs, Chief Juſtices, and other Officers and Juſtices whom it may concern, each in his

reſpective Station, to pay exact Obedience to the preſent Ordonnance, which ſhall be read, publiſhed and poſted up, where-ever it may be neceſſary, that no Perſon may pretend Ignorance thereof. Done at *Verſailles* the firſt Day of *February*, in the Year 1745.

Signed *Louis*,
By the King,
Phelypeaux.

And lower,

Ordonnance of the 16*th of* February 1745.

HIS Majeſty being informed, that the different Puniſhments, expreſſed in the Decrees, Declarations and Ordonnances, publiſhed againſt thoſe who aſſiſt at the unlawful Aſſemblies of the new Converts, have not yet been ſufficient entirely to ſtop the Courſe of them, becauſe they make but ſlight Impreſſions upon People, whoſe Minds are filled with Error, and produce the Fear only of a Puniſhment, from which each one flatters himſelf he ſhall eſcape; and his Majeſty being willing to put an End to theſe Diſorders, which would totally ceaſe, if thoſe of the new Converts, who fear being ſurprized themſelves in the Aſſemblies, of which they have always Notice, and who, not fearing to let their Children and Domeſticks go, but often ſending them there, were to deſiſt from thus favouring and fomenting the Aſſemblies by their ill Counſels, or by their Connivance and Silence, which render them not leſs guilty of Diſobedience, than thoſe even who aſſiſt therein, He would reſolve upon obliging all new Converts, for their own Sakes, to prevent the Holding ſuch Aſſemblies, or to give Information of them, ſeeing they are never kept without their Knowledge; or would puniſh them, as Accomplices of the ſaid Aſſemblies, by ſubjecting thoſe, who ſhall not inform againſt them, to the Payment of pecuniary and arbitrary Fines, which, for the Future, ſhall be indifferently laid upon all new Converts in the Cantons of the Diſtrict of *Montauban*, where

where any Aſſemblies ſhall be held: To theſe Ends his Majeſty has ordered and does Order,

Article I.

That in all the Corporations of the Diſtrict of *Montauban*, comprized in the State of the Diviſions, (called *Arrondiſſemens*) which ſhall be immediately drawn up by the Intendant of the ſaid Diſtrict, whom his Majeſty has authorized and does authorize for that Purpoſe, all the new Converts, inhabiting within the Extent of the Diviſions, ſhall be reſponſible for all the Aſſemblies which ſhall be held upon the Territory of the Corporations, whereof each Diviſion ſhall be compoſed.

II.

The new Converts, Inhabitants of the Diviſions, in the Extent of which it ſhall be proved that ſome Aſſemblies have been held, ſhall be condemned, without any Tryal or even Hearing by the ſaid Intendant, to pay an arbitrary Fine, proportioned to their Ability; and alſo to pay the Charges of the Proceedings, which ſhall have been had, on Account of the ſaid Aſſemblies; and the Aſſeſſments of the Fines and Charges ſhall be made by him, on the Knowledge he ſhall have of them, upon all the new converted Inhabitants, who ſhall be found compriſed in the Liſts of the Capitation, or Poll-Tax, in all the Corporations of the Diviſion.

III.

His Majeſty wills, that thoſe of the new Converts, who perform their Duty as Catholicks, and ſhall juſtify it by Certificates from their Biſhops or Grand Vicars, importing, that they frequent the Church and Sacraments, and that they have, for three preceeding and ſucceſſive Years, at leaſt, regularly performed all their Paſchal Duties, ſhall not be comprehended in the aboveſaid Aſſeſſments, unleſs there be Proof againſt them of their having attended at, or favour'd the ſaid Aſſemblies.

IV.

The new Converts of a Corporation of any Diviſion, within the Extent of which an Aſſembly ſhall be held, who ſhall give Advice and furniſh Proof of it, ſhall likewiſe be excepted in the Aſſeſſment; and when the ſaid Advices ſhall have been given time enough, to ſurprize the Aſſembly, all the People of that Corporation ſhall be diſcharged of the Fine, and their Portion thrown upon the reſt of the Diviſion.

V.

If any Aſſembly be held upon the Territory of a Corporation wholly compoſed of old Catholicks, and not comprehended in the State of the Diviſions, the Fine, in that Caſe, ſhall be born by the Diviſions that are the neareſt to the Place, where ſuch Aſſembly ſhall be held, in the Manner as ſhall be regulated and ordered by the ſaid Intendant.

VI.

If it happens, that any Aſſembly be held upon a Ground that is doubtful, and conteſted between ſome Corporations of the Diviſions, and ſome other Corporations of other Diviſions, the Fines, in that Caſe, ſhall be born by the Diviſions which are neareſt to the conteſted Ground, in the Manner as ſhall likewiſe be regulated and ordered by the ſaid Intendant.

VII.

All private Perſons, comprehended in the Liſts of Aſſeſſment, who ſhall be fined, ſhall be forced to the Payment of their Rates, by actual ſettled Garriſons.

VIII.

And whereas the Preachers who come from Abroad, or are brought up in the Country, and who are the principal Authors of all the Aſſemblies, could not keep them up, if they were not readily admitted and maintained in the Houſes of the new Converts, which is a Thing intirely oppoſite to the Prohibitions heretofore made on this Subject, His Majeſty orders, that all

all the new Converts of the Corporations of a Diviſion, in the Limits of which a Preacher may be arreſted, ſhall be condemned in a Fine of 3000 Livers, to be given to the Informers who ſhall have procured his being taken up; and this, independently of the Suit, which ſhall be made and carried on, agreeable to the Rigour of the former Ordonnances, Edicts and Declarations, againſt him, in whoſe Houſe the Preacher ſhall have been found.

IX.

His Majeſty does not intend by the preſent Ordonnance to derogate from the Diſpoſitions of the Edicts, Declarations, Decrees and Ordonnances publiſhed upon the Subject of the ſaid Aſſemblies, and particularly from that of the 1ſt of the preſent Month and Year, which ſhall be all executed according to their Form and Tenor. His Majeſty orders and requires the ſaid Intendant of the Diſtrict of *Montauban*, to ſee to the Execution of the preſent Ordonnance, which ſhall be publiſhed and poſted up where-ever it ſhall be neceſſary, that no one may ever pretend Cauſe of Ignorance. Done at *Verſailles* the 16th of *February* 1744.

Signed *Louis*,

And lower, *By the King*,

Phelypeaux.

The Injuſtice and Cruelty of ſuch Declarations, are ſo obvious, that every one muſt be ſtruck with them; however, in order they ſhould be executed in their fulleſt Extent, the Court hath ſent into the Diſtrict of *Montauban*, and Places adjacent, the favourite Miſſionaries, ſeveral Troops of Dragoons, who, acting like themſelves, have committed the moſt outrageous Violences, and the moſt unheard-of Exceſſes, and have reduced upwards of 6000 Souls to Beggary, and the the City of *Montauban* to a more miſerable Condition than it ever knew, even after the Wars it has been ſeveral Times obliged to maintain in its own Defence. This occaſioned ſeveral Thouſand Men, fill'd with Deſpair,

Deſpair to retire into the Woods, to defend a Life there, which they ſhould be ſure to loſe, if they remained in the open Country. Reſiſtance is either never to be admitted, or it muſt be in ſuch Circumſtances as theſe. Nature authorizes it, Reaſon prompts to it.

En quo violentia Cives
Perduxit miſeros!
Tantum Religio potuit ſuadere malorum!

Beſides, Perſecution rageth in *Dauphiny*; the Priſons there are fill'd with Proteſtants, who have been taken up for being found in Aſſemblies; ſeveral have been outlaw'd; almoſt every where they endeavour to ſecure their Lives by Flight. The 16th of *February* a Miniſter named *Roux*, was arreſted in the Borough of *Livran*, put into Priſon, and loaded with Fetters; the 12th of *March* he was hanged in the City of *Die*: After the Execution they cut off his Head, and expoſed it in the Place, where he had been taken; an Example of Cruelty unheard off till now. Others have been condemned to ſuffer Pains of an extraordinary Severity; and, amongſt others, one named *Roille*, of *Oſſe*, neat *Gret*, who, for having performed the Office of Reader in an Aſſembly, has lately been condemned by the Parliament of *Grenoble* to be whipt by the Hands of the Hangman, marked, and ſent to the Galleys for Life; which was to have been executed the 15th of *March*.

We expect every Day to have farther Accounts of theſe tragical Examples. And it ſeems neceſſary, on many Accounts, that we ſhould not be intirely ignorant of them in this Country.

Such is the Situation of Catholick *France*, under the Reign of *Louis* the XVth. It was not, without doubt, by Declarations which have ſuch fatal Effects, that that Prince acquired the Title of *Well-beloved*; nor, will it be by ſuch Edicts, that he can hope to preſerve it.

LONDON: Printed by *E. Owen*, in *Amen-Corner*.
Price 5 *s.* a Hundred.

B.KF
Howey
10-20-4
53788.